

DPS Chaparral



Produced by DPS Public Information, (512) 424-2080

October 1999

Traffic deaths increase in 1998

Traffic deaths were up 1.9 percent in 1998, but alcohol-related deaths dropped slightly compared to 1997.

Those numbers are included in the final 1998 traffic report issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

"We were discouraged, but hardly surprised, by the number of traffic deaths," said DPS Director **Col. Dudley M. Thomas**. "We need the driving public's help to make a real impact on the death toll on Texas roads. So long as people insist on drinking and driving, speeding, driving recklessly and not wearing safety belts, there's only so much law enforcement can do."

There were 3,576 traffic deaths in Texas last year, compared to 3,508 in 1997. Non-injury crashes jumped 5.6 percent and overall collisions were up .7 percent.

For the fifth year in a row, the percentage of people killed in alcohol-related crashes declined. In 1998, 29.6 percent of Texas traffic fatalities were alcohol-related—down 0.8 percent.

"It wasn't much of a decrease, but we'll note the progress and go from there," said Thomas. "Hopefully, the lower .08 blood alcohol concentration will help bring that number down even lower, where
(Please see page 4)

It's SECC time—can you spare a dime?

The State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) runs through the end of October. DPS employees gave a record \$44,726 statewide last year, with Austin, Corpus Christi, Houston, Laredo, Midland/Odessa, San Angelo and San Antonio all having great campaigns.

We're hoping for even bet-

ter participation since only 11 of the 22 campaign areas participated last year. Please look at the brochure for your area and consider at least one charity to which you can make a donation or pledge.

For more information, contact campaign coordinator **Beth Warren** in the Public Information Office, 700-225-5639.

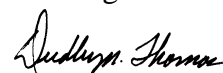
Dear Fellow Employee:

Image is an intangible thing, but it's worth twice the price of any tangible object. How we are perceived—as individuals, state employees or as an agency—is invaluable.

The DPS has always had a good image in Texas and across the nation. Recently, the Department has been involved in some high profile matters that have added to the generally positive image that we enjoy.

But like any intangible, image also is short-lived. A positive image can be tarnished quicker than you get that first dent on a new car. The DPS touches the lives of hundreds of thousands of Texans each year, from that teenager who comes to a driver license office to get his first DL to that motorist stopped for speeding. Beyond that, hundreds of us answer telephone calls from the public, from people with simple questions to those calling to voice complaints or offer a tip in a criminal investigation.

I ask each of you, when you come in contact with the public, to remember the DPS' three-word motto: Courtesy, Service and Protection. Be courteous in dealing with the public, even if someone does not extend that same courtesy to you. A bad image is not a pretty picture.



DPS online: www.txdps.state.tx.us

DPS "on the air": 512-424-7777

Short Shots

Tr. III **Richard Fernandez**, L&W Del Rio, received a Medal of Valor for his bravery and heroic efforts during flash floods that ravaged Del Rio in August 1998. Riding in the bucket of a front-end loader driven by Del Rio City Water Works Director Jim Palmer, Fernandez helped answer the anguished cries of frightened residents surrounded by darkness and swirling waters. He is credited with helping rescue at least seven people—including his parents—from rooftops or from inside flooded homes. The rescue vehicle eventually sank in the floodwaters during a rooftop rescue of a young boy, but Fernandez and Palmer swam the boy to safety and continued their rescue efforts. Palmer, who was nominated by Lt. **Michael Thomson** (HP San Angelo), received a Director's Award for his efforts.

Tr. V **Tim Mollenkopf**, HP Seguin, received a Medal of Valor after rescuing a man and his daughter

during the October 1998 floods in Guadalupe County. The raging Guadalupe River swept the victims' home downstream, forcing them to spend the night and the next day on a pile of debris. Mollenkopf and two game wardens navigated the swift, debris-filled water and the precarious debris to pluck the seriously injured man and his 11-year-old daughter from the river.

Mollenkopf and **Fernandez** are only the sixteenth and seventeenth DPS employees to receive the Department's highest honor.

"I know good police work when I see it," pronounced Senior Ranger Capt. **Bruce Casteel**, as seven people were honored for their role in the surrender of suspected serial killer Angel Maturino Resendiz. Texas Ranger Sgts. **Drew Carter** (Houston), **Brian Taylor** (Bellville) and **David Maxwell** (Bay City) all received Director's Citations. FBI Special Agent Kimberly Wilkins, Sr. Inspector Robert Helwig of the U.S. Marshals Service, Houston PD Detective Robert Huseman and Houston PD Sgt. Tom Ladd received

Director's Citations. The awards highlighted the cooperative, multi-agency investigation of nine murders across three states and the negotiations that led to the end of the string of murders. In one of the climatic moments of the year, Resendiz surrendered to Carter, Wilkins and Helwig at an international bridge in El Paso.

Tr. I **Brian K. Smith**, HP Dimmitt, received a Director's Citation for spearheading a dramatic rescue when a pickup was swept off the roadway in Castro County. Smith disregarded his own safety and plunged into the freezing water to offer moral support to a man stranded on a fence post, neck deep in the floodwaters. He then coordinated a rescue plan and eventually pulled the weakening man to safety with the help of other rescue workers. Smith was treated for hypothermia after spending nearly 25 minutes in the frigid waters.

A decade of service to DPS and law enforcement culminated with a Director's Citation for forensic anthropologist Dr. David M. Glassman.



On the mend...

You might try to find the time to drop some old friends a line...

Tr. **Kenneth Rushing**, L&W Conroe, continues his remarkable recovery from severe leg injuries suffered when a Mac truck tractor crashed into him while he was making a roadside inspection on July 18, 1998. He came dangerously close to losing one of his legs. Today, after 10 operations and 11

months in a wheelchair, he is now up and walking with the aid of a walker and a cane. "I have a good wife and a strong determination in my mind to get back to work someday," Rushing says.

Tr. **Dub Gillum**, HP Granbury, continues to make progress after being shot six times while making a traffic stop on Oct. 1, 1998. Three bullets are still with him from that attack, including one near his optical nerve. Gillum continues to battle vision problems, especially in his right

eye, but is hopeful that time and medical treatment will allow him to return to work and fulfill his dream of becoming a Special Crimes investigator. He is currently working on getting a work release with restrictions.

Former Tr. **Richard Miller**, HP Athens, will soon begin a new career as a financial investment advisor. Miller has taken an occupational disability retirement after a severe knee injury suffered in a fleet crash in December 1997.

Dr. Glassman, who chairs the Southwest Texas State University Anthropology Department, has been instrumental in many murder investigations and the identification of numerous crime victims. The Texas Rangers, Special Crimes Service and Crime Laboratory Service have all lauded his efforts, which included numerous lectures at the DPS Training Academy. Glassman was nominated by Texas Ranger Chief **Bruce Casteel**.

Texas rules national L&W roost

Tr. **David Palmer**, L&W Childress, walked away with top honors at the recent National Competition Challenge in Tampa, Florida. The competition tested skills and knowledge of federal motor carrier regulations. Palmer beat out 54 other contestants from the U.S. and other countries in three different inspection areas. It is the first time a DPS representative has won first place at the event.

Letter: Tr. Goodwin and family

In the aftermath of the accident I was involved in over the July 4th holiday weekend, my family and I found great comfort in the support we received from the department. The kind words, thoughts, and prayers from friends will not be forgotten. I am proud to serve in an organization that is made up of such a caring bunch of people. Thank you again for your support!

Sincerely,

Floyd T. Goodwin II
HP, Texas City

Taking the SWAT team by storm

If you're interested in joining the

Toll-free DPS numbers:

☎ Roadway emergencies or drug trafficking:

1-800-525-5555

☎ Crime Stoppers: 1-800-252-TIPS

☎ Concealed Handgun Licensing: 1-800-224-5744

☎ Motorcycle Safety: 1-800-292-5787

☎ Missing Persons Clearinghouse:

1-800-346-3243

☎ Railroad crossing malfunctions:

1-800-772-7677

☎ Marijuana cultivation: 1-800-868-6274

SWAT team, a team member selection is scheduled for 8 a.m Nov. 1. Any commissioned officer with the DPS who has completed recruit school and is stationed in Travis County, or within two contiguous counties, is eligible to apply. Submit a letter through the chain of command to: SWAT Team Commander, 9000 IH-35, Austin, TX 78753. Applicants will have to meet physical fitness standards, undergo firearms testing and participate in a psychological interview. Notify **Doug Vance**, SWAT Team Commander, of your intention to apply before Oct. 15. He can be reached at (512) 873-3159.

Survey says.....

The Department will once again participate in the Survey of Organizational Excellence. DPS employees should receive a questionnaire in the mail by the middle of the month. The University of Texas survey will allow anonymous employee feedback about the Department's strengths and weaknesses. You are strongly

encouraged to take time to document your thoughts.

Y2K Ready

The Department's computer systems are ready for the new millennium. Information Management Service employees, outside contractors and users of the applications have spent the last year-and-a-half making sure DPS' computer systems will function properly in the year 2000. The driver license system, CCH (computerized criminal history), TCIC (Texas Crime Information Center), TLETS (Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System) and accounting and human resources applications have been tested and are up and running on Y2K-compliant software and hardware. The project was completed on time and within budget. However, there will be continuing Y2K work through early 2000.

Operation Motorcide

At least 40 people died in traffic crashes during the long Labor Day

holiday. That includes two people who died after the weekend from injuries sustained during the Motorcade time period. The DPS had estimated that 39 people could die during the holiday. This was the fourth straight year that 40 or more people have perished on Texas roadways during the Labor Day weekend.

CHL reciprocity agreement reached with Arizona

Arizona is the latest state to enter into a concealed handgun reciprocity agreement with Texas. Texas now recognizes concealed handgun licenses from Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, and vice versa.

Another FBI graduate

Sgt. **Garth Davis**, HP Austin, represented the DPS at the 198th session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. Davis is the third DPS officer to graduate from the FBI National Academy this year.

Hit the links

Participants called the first DPS Golf Committee Tournament a success. The tournament was played at a course in Elgin. More tournaments are planned, and DPSers across the state are invited to participate. Please call **Al Saenz** at 512-424-5145 to play in the next tournament.



Call 512-424-7777
for the
inside scoop!

Mile Markers

40-year Service Award

C.B. Isbell, Inspector III, Veh. Insp. Svc., Beaumont.

Administration Promotions

Tavia M. Wendlandt, Prog. Administrator IV, HR Austin to Asst. Mgr., Bldg. Programs Austin.

TLE Promotions

Arthur R. Garza, Cap. Pol. Officer II, Austin to Sgt., Cap. Pol. Austin.

Retirements

Richard Dale Burger, Tr. V, MVI Austin, 37 yrs., 4 mos., 8 days; **Linda Frances Herzog**, Shift Supr., FP&R Bureau Austin, 30 yrs., 6

mos., 28 days; **George Leroy Milner, Jr.**, Prog. Supr., IMS Austin, 25 yrs., 27 days; **Melva Sue Anderson**, Office Coordinator, TLE Chief's staff Austin, 20 yrs., 3 mos., 13 days; **Roberta Helms**, DL Tech., DL Austin, 14 yrs., 6 mos.; **Ross Hamilton Powell, Jr.**, Cpl. V, L&W Greenville, 30 yrs., 2 mos., 8 days; **Jean Ann Riley**, DL Tech., DL New Braunfels, 27 yrs., 10 mos., 28 days; **Guillerma B. Solis**, DL Tech., DL Houston, 6 yrs., 9 mos.; **Anna Marie Kovar**, Office Supr., Fleet Op., Austin, 28 yrs., 7 mos.

Deaths

Richard Faught, ret. Admin. Tech. II, DIC Austin (May 1959 to Sept. 1988) died Aug. 31.

Calling all DPS webpage designers!

What would the perfect DPS home page would look like? The DPS Webpage Committee is looking for a few good designs. We need your entry on disk, including all files, by 5 p.m. on Oct. 29.

Contact Roy Reyna at Roy.Reyna@txdps.state.tx.us or 512-424-2918 for information.

If your design is chosen, you will receive special recognition and the gratitude of your fellow employees.

Traffic fatalities, from page 1

it belongs.”

There were also some positive signs on the seat belt front. The number of people killed who were not properly restrained decreased to 46 percent—compared to 52 percent the year before.

The number of motorcyclists killed rose 31 percent in 1998. The number of people killed who were not wearing their helmets increased

53 percent. Pedestrian fatalities were up four percent.

For the third year in a row, there were no deathless days on Texas roadways.

An Aug. 20, 1998 wreck in Duval County had the highest death toll—eight people were killed when two pick-ups collided and caught fire. Alcohol and a tire blowout were listed as causes.